

REMARKS

I. INTRODUCTION

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the present amendments and following discussion, is respectfully requested.

II. STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 5-14 are pending; Claims 1-4 are cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer; Claims 5, 9, and 11 are amended; and no claims are newly added herewith. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added by this amendment.

III. SUMMARY OF THE OFFICE ACTION

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-4 and 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by *Conrad et al.* (U.S. Patent No. 6,334,234, hereafter *Conrad*). Claims 5-8 and 10-12 were indicated as allowable. Claims 13 and 14 were allowed.

IV. REJECTIONS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 102

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-4 were rejected as anticipated by *Conrad*. As Claims 1-4 have been cancelled herewith and Claim 9 depends from allowable Claim 5, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection has been obviated by the present amendment.

V. ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that Claims 5-8 and 10-12 contain allowable subject matter. Claims 5 and 11 are now in independent form. Accordingly, as Claims 6-10 depend from Claim 5 and Claim 12 depends from Claim 11, it is respectfully submitted that these claims are in condition for allowance.

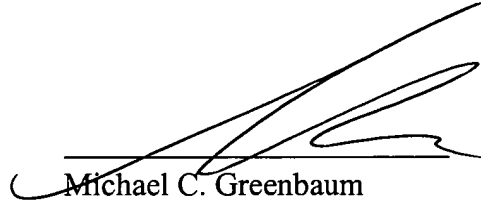
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Applicants further acknowledge with appreciation the indication that Claims 13 and 14 are allowed.

VII. CONCLUSION

Consequently, in view of the foregoing discussion and present amendments, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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